

09/612946

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Location information of each device connected to a network is managed in a hierarchical structure to display the location of each device in a manner easy to be recognized by a user. The location information of each device connected to the network is managed in the hierarchical structure and layout bit maps are stored in each client. When a client issues a device search request, the hierarchical location of the device whose location search was requested can be identified, and the identified location of the device can be displayed in a way to be easily recognized. If the layout bit map corresponding to the search result does not exists, the device can be displayed and registered through visual operations at a desired position. When the client displays the map information, it is unnecessary for a sever to transmit the map information to the client.